# Digital Education Conference

## DEC24

## Conference Introduction

The Digital Education Conference brings educators, researchers, tech/student support and industry professionals together to share and discover innovative uses of technology in an ever-changing teaching and learning environment. This conference will stimulate dialogue and debate in our education landscape as we move through learning and teaching to utlise the technology suitable and relevant to our needs whether its immersive XR, VR applications or the myriad that is Gen AI and opportunities and challenges therein related to academic integrity, ethics, efficiency, engagement and creativity. How we navigate through the emergent developments in a human-centric manner cognisant of our values, beliefs and vision illuminates the transformative opportunities of education in our society to be inclusive, exciting journey for all.

This event provides an opportunity to present your research and practice-related projects, extend your network and dive into new collaborative ideation with practical and theoretical contributions. The conference will take place over two days, 10th and 11th December. The 2-day rate for 10th and the 11th December is €70 (incl. daily refreshments and the Conference dinner in the Tower Hotel on 10th December). The 1-day rate is €20.The conference schedule starts on Day 1:9:30am to 5:30pm, and Day 2: 9:00am to 4:00pm.

This event aims to showcase the excellent work that the Faculty of Education and Lifelong learning in SETU and many other schools within our university and across our partner universities MTU, ATU, TUD, TUS, DKIT and the wider Education communities are actively engaged.

This dynamic forum is dedicated to the exploration and advancement of pedagogical practices in the digital age. This gathering serves as a crucible for the exchange of innovative ideas, research findings, and best practices in the realm of digital education. As we navigate the ever-evolving landscape of technology-enhanced learning, this conference provides a platform for educators, researchers, and experts to engage in critical dialogues, share insights, and collaboratively shape the future of education in the digital era. With a diverse array of sessions, workshops, and keynote presentations, we aim to foster a holistic understanding of the multifaceted challenges and opportunities that digital education presents. We look forward to the enlightening discussions, collaborations, and discoveries that will emerge during this intellectually stimulating event.

## Venue

The conference will take place in the SETU O'Connell Bianconi Building which is located on our Cork Road Campus, X91 K0EK. Information on campus location, car parking, and travelling by bike, air, rail, bus and taxi can be found on the following link: *How to Find Us - SETU Waterford Campus.* Car parking next to the building will be accessible on the day free of charge. Should anyone have any particular accessibility requirements please let us know and we can ensure you are fully accommodated.



## Networking Event - Conference Dinner and hotel accommodation

The conference dinner will be hosted in The Tower Hotel. Located in the heart of the City, there is a Christmas Wonderland on our doorstep for all to enjoy which is sure to get you in the festive spirit. Winterval 2024 is in the heart of the city and all the attractions a short walk away. Our conference dinner will be in the Hobson's restaurant located on the first floor overlooking The Mall and the Marina, Hobson's offers the best views in Waterford city for dining. We have secured a conference rate of B&B €120 per night ask the hotel for details referencing DEC24 @SETU. We have also options for Pub craic after dinner Peter Windle leading the posse.

## About Waterford

Waterford City, steeped in centuries of history and nestled along the picturesque banks of the River Suir, is a captivating gem on the Emerald Isle. With a heritage dating back over a thousand years, Waterford is renowned as Ireland's oldest city, and its rich past is palpable in every cobblestone street and ancient building. Visitors are transported back in time as they explore the city's well-preserved medieval architecture, including the iconic Reginald's Tower, a Viking relic that stands as a sentinel to the city's formidable past. Waterford's historical significance is further celebrated at the Waterford Crystal , where master craftsmen create exquisite crystal pieces that are revered worldwide. The city also offers a vibrant cultural scene, with lively pubs and traditional music echoing through its charming



lanes. Nestled in the heart of Ireland's stunning southeast, Waterford is a must-visit destination for those seeking a captivating blend of history, culture, and natural beauty.

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Winterval, Ireland's largest Christmas festival returns to Waterford this November and December for its 12th year with its biggest and most festive programme yet. Waterford, Ireland's oldest city, will be transformed into a magical Winterval wonderland from Friday, November 15th until Friday, December 23rd. Be a part of the journey through a world of Christmas celebration, magical experiences, festive family attractions, seasonal surprises and an abundance of free and ticketed events for all ages to enjoy.

Brought to you by Waterford City and County Council, Winterval 2024 will see the return of lots of the original attractions like Santa's arrival to Waterford, Winterval On Ice, the Port of Waterford Eye, The Helter Skelter and The Carousel; newer events like the Winterval Circus, Glow, and the Lego Exhibition, and magical reimaginations of so many of the festival favourites including a multi-dimensional light show, European-style Winterval food and craft markets, a packed programme of live music and performances and an enchanting display of festive decoration that will dazzle and delight Kids from 1 to 92 … and it's all happening this Christmas in the heart of Waterford City.

The 25 mile journey from Tramore to Dungarvan is known as the copper coast. It is the only official European Geopark in Ireland and is celebrated for it's diversity of rock formations and beautiful coastline. If feeling brave Newtown Cove and the Guillamene are good spots for a winter dip and Tramore beach or Kilmurrin for a surf. Contact the programme committee for more information.

## Keynote Speakers

Prof Van Hout holds PhDs in Public Health (Teesside University) and in Law (Liverpool John Moore's University), along with LLM and M.Sc qualifications in Health Professions Education, in Health Promotion, and in International Addictions.

Prof Van Hout has an extensive track record in inter-disciplinary global health research and knowledge transfer, with over 300 peer-reviewed journal publications, and €14 million in research funding ( EU, Irish, UK Research Councils, and pharmaceutical industries).

Prof Van Hout has actively consulted for WHO, UNODC, UNAIDS, Council of Europe and EUDA as a substantive human rights law and health policy expert.

Prof Van Hout was first appointed as Lecturer int WIT in 2004, and in 2017 was promoted to Senior Lecturer (School of Health Sciences). She became Professor of International Public Health at Liverpool John Moore's University in late 2017, where she also served as Associate Dean for Research and Knowledge Exchange, and Head of Global Health at the Institute for Health Research. She holds adjunct Professorships in Ireland, the UK, Portugal, South Africa and the US, and is Vice Chair of a MSCA Life Sciences Panel.

Martin Curley is Professor of Innovation at Maynooth University and Director of the Digital Health Ecosystem at the Innovation Value Institute at Maynooth University, Ireland. Most recently Martin was Chief Information Officer and Director of Digital Transformation for Ireland's National Health Service (HSE) and previously was Senior Vice President at Mastercard and head of Global Digital Practice. Martin is chair of the UNGA Digital Health Symposium and has previously been Vice President, Senior Principal Engineer and Director of Intel Labs Europe as well as Global Director of IT Innovation at Intel Corporation.

He has held engineering management positions at Philips and General Electronic also. Martin has been identified as a top 10 global influential, inspiring and impactful health leader/educator by a number of international publications and was awarded European Chief Technology Officer of the year in 2015. He is author of eight books on Innovation, Digital and Entrepreneurship and has keynoted and led executive education across the world. Recently he was a senior advisor to Saskatchewan Health Authority, Canada and is currently a senior advisor to Bearing Point.  In 2020 Martin and his HSE Digital Transformation team received the world public sector innovation award from ICC and in 2024 Martin was awarded national digital transformation leader of the year for his work in Digital Health Transformation.

Aidan is a Lecturer in Management Studies in the School of Business at South East Technological University and has more than 25 years' experience in higher education. He is a Programme Director of the Lean Enterprise Excellence Programme portfolio at SETU. Aidan has co-developed courses and curriculum with industry partners to meet their capability development needs.

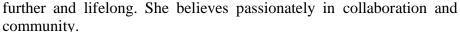Aidan is a Co-Lead of the Academy of Lean Enterprise Excellence in the SETU RIKON research centre. His doctoral research investigated competencies for managing lean improvement activity in hospitals and his research interests include lean implementation in healthcare and the people dimension of Lean Industry 4.0 integration

Tom has worked as a Social Science Lecturer in ITT/MTU for over twenty years on a number of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. An advocate for digital education he describes himself as a critical technophile. He has recently been promoted to a Senior Lecturer Academic Developer role with the N-TUTORR project in MTU and has also recently been awarded Senior Fellow status with Advance HE. His approach to research and practice dissemination at conferences, the Gasta, has its origins in his frustration with session chairs that let people go way over time, often leaving the final speaker little or no time. Hence, with Tom, five minutes literally means five minutes! The Gasta format has been used in Ireland, the UK and Canada and if you want to find out a little more about Gasta and Tom you can check out his blog: Can You Gasta?

Dr Leigh Graves Wolf is teacher-scholar and an Assistant Professor in Educational Development with Teaching and Learning at UCD. Her work focuses on online education, critical digital pedagogy, educator professional development and relationships mediated by and with technology. She has worked across the educational spectrum from primary to higher to further and lifelong. She believes passionately in collaboration and community.

Dr Jim Diamond is a researcher in the field of digital media and learning, focused primarily on the use of educational games to enrich K–12 learning and teaching for students and teachers.

Diamond uses design-based research methods to create and study technologies that foster individual learner agency in real-world learning settings. He has extensive experience in educational research, design, and evaluation, and his areas of interest include history, social studies, and civics education; STEM education; computational thinking; and disciplinary literacy.His research has been funded by the National Science Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation's HASTAC Digital Media and Learning Initiative, the Gates Foundation, and the Robin Hood Learning + Technology Fund.

Diamond has a BA and an EdM from Boston University, and a PhD from New York University.

# Workshop Hosts

## WS1 Using VR in teaching and learning

Daithi O'Murchu, Brian Casey Hans Moolman MTU Eirmersive

International consultant and expert advisor in education, AI, sustainability citizenship, disruptive technologies.

Daithí holds the diplomatic position of Honorary Consul for Côte d'Ivoire to the Rep. of Ireland.  As an author, innovator, CEO, disruptor and expert consultant, my journey with education, emerging trends in AI, Robotics, 4IR, Industry-5, VR, AR, XR, Blockchain and Cloud technologies has led me to a deeper understanding of global consciousness, sustainable transformation and Climate Action. My association  with governments, companies, experts, minority/tribal groups and universities in sustainability, Climate Action, Nature Based Solutions (NBS) education, empowerment, innovation, international trends, tourism, change management, business and consultancy in the Future of Now, has afforded me the privilege of being consciously, ethically and sustainably at the cutting edge of evolving best practice.

## WS2 New digital technologies: A learning and teaching Odyssey

Dr Perry Share is Head of Student Success at Atlantic Technological University. He was previously Head of Department of Social Science and Head of Faculty of Business and Social Sciences.
A sociologist, Perry has research interests in the sociology of food and eating, social robotics/AI and higher education. His most recent publication is the (co-edited) 4th edition of the text *Social Care Work – an introduction for Irish students* [IPA 2023].

He has had a long interest in learning, teaching and assessment and has, with his ATU colleague Dr John Pender, been exploring the impact of both social robotics and AI in higher education since 2016. With Dr Pender he has been investigating how such technologies may impact on the social professions and how students in such fields can be engaged in social robots and AI. He and Dr Pender led a multi-country Erasmus project on social robotics pedagogy [PRoSPEro] from 2018-2022. He has also conducted numerous workshops on AI and HE in Irish HEIs and for the Department of Education.

Dr John Pender is a Senior Lecturer in Politics, Social Policy, and Foresight at Atlantic Technological University. Pender's professional affiliations include full membership in the British Political Science Association and the Sociological Association of Ireland. His extensive work experience includes serving as Principal Lecturer in Politics and Social Policy at Leeds Beckett University from 1993 to 2004 before joining Atlantic Technological University. In the last five years, Dr Pender – in collaboration with his ATU Sligo colleague Dr Perry Share - has published extensively on social robotics and AI and its implications for social professions.

Notable publications include articles in the Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies, chapters in several textbooks and contributions to various academic conferences and edited volumes. He was joint Principal Investigator for the ERASMUS+ funded PRoSPEro project and a member of the Creating Our Future Expert Working Group under Ireland's Department of Further and Higher Education. Along with Dr Share, he is currently completing work on a MOOC on social robots.

### WS3 Scaling Learning Technologies: Strategic Approaches and Challenges in Higher Education

Brian qualified as an Engineer in 1978 and originally worked in mathematical modelling and simulation, and the application of IT in engineering. Having retired formally from the role of Head on Online Learning Strategic Projects in December 2022, where he has worked as a lecturer and learning technology developer since 1984, Brian continues to pursue his passion for innovation in education through consultancy and advisory work (edfutures.ie) and through international *pro-bono* projects. He has been a leader in online distance learning in Ireland, initiating it in the country's largest provider, IT Sligo, in 2002 and has contributed significantly to the growth of e-learning in Ireland since 2000 as a founding member of the Irish Learning Technology Association and the EdTech series of conferences.

Dr Irene McCormick is a Senior Lecturer at South East Technological University (SETU), specialising in Teaching and Learning and media practice. With over 20 years of experience as a producer/director at RTÉ and Granada TV in the UK, Irene has a rich background in television production. She transitioned to academia 18 years ago and has since been an active figure in tertiary education. As the Course Director of the renowned SETU degree in Content Creation and Social Media, Irene combines her industry expertise with innovative teaching methods to inspire the next generation of media professionals. Her passion for innovative education and progressive media education has made her a respected figure at SETU.

### WS4 NTUTORR GENAI Play AI

Dr Hazel Farrell the lead for the N-TUTORR GenAI:N3 project and is also the South East Technological University (SETU) Academic Lead for Gen AI. She has been actively involved in technology enhanced learning for many years with student engagement initiatives for creative disciplines at the forefront of her work. Coming from a background in analytical musicology, she is also the programme leader for the BA (Hons) Music degree in SETU. She is a founder member of CASE (Creative Approaches to Student Engagement) and through her work with this group, she became an early adopter of Gen AI in the classroom.

She serves on the Steering Committee for Gen AI in the university and has developed resources and facilitated training to support the university community in the challenges and opportunities of this technology. She has presented extensively both nationally and internationally on a variety of Gen AI related topics and has several publications in this space.

Emmett Cullinane is a Learning Consultant, Instructional Designer and Learning Technologist, with over 20 years of experience blending technology and learning. Emmet's profile is diverse and interdisciplinary, including technology, biopharma and third-level education. With a Masters in eLearning Design and Development, he brings his experience to bear on the intersection of technology and learning, where his passion is centred on innovative learning solutions to enhance the learning experience. His recent initiatives include designing and developing the GenAI Student Guidelines online module, and along with SETU colleagues - delivering AI Play sessions across multiple campuses.

## WS5 Generativism: AI For Education

Frances O Donnell, an instructional designer at Atlantic Technological University, combines her expertise in digital education with a commitment to helping others build confidence and skills for balanced, rewarding learning and work experiences. With a Master's in Applied Practice (Education), a Professional Diploma in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership, and a Higher Diploma in Interaction Design (UX), she has been involved in research on educational change, innovative learning environments, collaborative teaching, and students' use of artificial intelligence in higher education. Frances is a regular contributor to TeachNetIreland, where she shares tips for utilising educational technology.

Dr Bernie Goldbach entering the final stretch in front of university students. Planning to share more my experience of more than 40 years in the field of adult education through articles for professional journals and open publications.

Specialties: College lecturer in digital transformation with AI, internet and web technologies, electronic content management, media studies, audio production and basic writing skills. Certified instructor pilot in 19 different aircraft.

Former technology journalist for The Irish Examiner. Contributor TippFM.Started a web journal in 1997, morphed into a daily blog written with a mobile phone in February 2002 and still online today with topgold.micro.blog and InsideView.ie.

## WS6    Empowering Conversations: Creating a Culture of Sustainable Action

Sustainability Network (ISSN) in March 2021 Dr Patrick Kirwan has developed a series of national initiatives including the Climate and Nature Summit and Bitesize Biodiversity.  Patrick has developed an award winning model for nature education in secondary schools and he believes that we need to build partnerships within and across sectors in order to accelerate action on climate and biodiversity.

Susan Adams is an environmentalist, TED speaker and educator in conservation and climate change. Susan started an award winning social enterprise, Education for Sustainability to address the deficit of action-based environmental education in schools. Since 2017, her workshops, teacher training and climate literacy course have impacted thousands of people in schools and communities all over Ireland.

## WS7    Digital Sustainability: Empowering ESD & Carbon Literacy

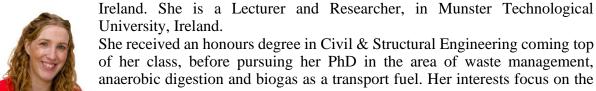**Dr. Nataliya Romanyatova** is a Postdoctoral Researcher on Education for Sustainable Development and Instructional Designer in South East Technological University, Ireland. Her background is in the area of education, linguistics, research and instructional design.

Nataliya worked as an English language lecturer, associate professor, and instructional designer in several universities in Ireland and abroad. Since her undergraduate degree, she has been passionate about pushing the boundaries of Higher and Adult Education, looking beyond the norm and evaluating how staff and students can be supported and engaged through innovative pedagogical approaches. Nataliya is managing several key university projects on sustainability, which include SETU Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) community of practice, Sulitest pilot launch, ESD Toolkit and Climate Fresk Game SETU CEKO programme. Nataliya is the Climate Justice Universities Union SETU Representative and the National Forum SETU UDL Lead.

Dr. Niamh Power is the current Chairperson of the Environmental Science association of Ireland. She is a Lecturer and Researcher, in Munster Technological University, Ireland.

She received an honours degree in Civil & Structural Engineering coming top of her class, before pursuing her PhD in the area of waste management, anaerobic digestion and biogas as a transport fuel. Her interests focus on the area of sustainability with particular expertise in waste management, anaerobic digestion, renewable energy from wastes & crops, nutrient recycling, nutrient recover from wastewater, life cycle analysis and policies & drivers for

change and the circular economy. She is involved in
a number of large national and EU research projects on the circular economy, solar PV (InVEST) sustainable use of nutrients these projects including (ReNu2Cycle, ReNu2Farm and Phos4You,) and future resilience of the farming sector (SIMONE). Dr. Power also worked on the N-TUTORR project as the sustainability lead for MTU and looked at embedding education for sustainable development within higher education.

Dr David Nyaluke is the University College Cork (UCC) Education for Sustainable Development Officer working to support lecturers and students at UCC to include and engage with sustainable development goals (SDGs) and other sustainability dimensions in teaching and learning in curricular and co-curricular programs and activities.

A native of Tanzania where he began his university studies, David completed a PhD in political economy and development from Dublin City University. His doctoral thesis investigated challenges and trajectories of socio-economic development transformation of African states from independence into the 21st Century.

Between 2017 and 2024 working as the *Proudly Made in Africa* fellow, David lectured in all universities and institutes of technology in Ireland on Africa, business and global sustainability as of part the development and global citizenship education programs in business schools.
In community engagement David is the Convener of the Business and Development Study Group at Development Studies Association of Ireland(DSAI), the vice-chairperson of the African Scholars Association of Ireland, (AfSAI) and the co-chair of the Steering Committee for United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024 (UNIDPAD) in Ireland.

WS8    Where Creativity & Technology meet: Ideas for Inclusive Technology-Enhanced Learning in Higher Education Classrooms.

Clare began her career in education in 2012, teaching English in Thailand. Over the following years, she gained diverse teaching experience in five other countries. Upon returning to Ireland in 2018, she started working with individuals under international protection, where her interest in integrating technology into education took root. While working with WWETB in Waterford City and Dungarvan, Clare taught a range of subjects, from English language to IT, while championing the value of technology-enhanced learning in the classroom. Now a Learning Technologist with CTEL, Clare has built on her expertise through an MA in E-Learning and an MEd, and is very passionate about all classrooms being inclusive learning opportunities,.
Deirdre is an Associate Lecturer at SETU, Department of Arts where she is working currently working with on the Theatre Studies on BA (hons) Arts degree programme as well as teaching Creative Skills on BA Social Care and Creative Practice/Dance with BA Early Childhood & Care programmes.

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Deirdre trained originally as a dancer at Middlesex University, London and in 1999 co-founded, her own contemporary dance company, Myriad Dance in Wexford. Between 1999-2013 produced numerous choreographic dance works for theatre audiences as well as leading several participatory community projects with diverse communities. She is also a former Dance Artist in Residence at Garter Lane Arts Centre, Waterford (2017-2022).

Deirdre is the Creative Lead for Traces Dance Ensemble, Waterford (a group of young dancers with Intellectual Disability) where she is currently delivering Glor Dance Project 2023-2025 – funded by the Creative Ireland /Creative Youth Nurture Fund.

## WS9    Accessibility in HE classrooms

Gavin Hendrick and Karen Holland, Brickfield

## WS10    Workshop on Revisiting the University Course Timetabling

Dr Diarmuid Grimes's research involves the application of machine learning techniques and optimisation technologies to real-world problems, such as condition-based maintenance for trains (predict health of train components based on sensory data, schedule maintenance taking this prediction into account together with constraints on staff, maintenance depot, etc.), and energy optimisation (optimally schedule energy consumption such that cost is minimised using predicted energy prices),

Dr Cemalettin Ozturk is a Lecturer in Logistics & Supply Chain Management at Munster Technology University. He has over 15 years of experience as project coordinator, technical contributor and scientist in the area of smart manufacturing, supply chain management, data and decision analytics applications in various domains.

Before joining MTU he worked in Raytheon Technologies Research Center Ireland, Insight Centre for Data Analytics at University College Cork and Izmir University of Economics, Department of Industrial Engineering in Turkey.

Details of his academic and industrial work can be found in Google Scholar and LinkedIn profiles.

## WS11    Fostering Digital Wellbeing: Strategies for Educators to Navigate and Promote Healthy Technology Engagement

Oonagh O'Brien (PhD, MSc, BSc, PMP, SFHEA) is a cyberpsychology researcher and a lecturer in Computer Science at MTU. Her research primarily explores the connections between wellbeing, loneliness, and problematic internet use. Her findings have contributed to educational innovations at MTU and the Ingenium European University.

Notably, she has developed a program for Ingenium European university, aimed at supporting student digital wellbeing, raising awareness not only of student responsibilities as users of digital technology, but also as future business leaders in the design, development, and deployment of digital technologies. This program is offered as a free choice elective and envisioned as a module which all students will have the opportunity to include in their undergraduate education.

Dr Jeremiah Spillane is an instructional designer and digital learning specialist working with the Dept. of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) at Munster Technological University (MTU). He has a background in music & audio/visual technologies and has previously worked as a Digital Learning Officer with the Royal College of Music (RCM) and as a Senior Learning Technologist at the University of Galway.

**WS12**    Music Making in a Virtual World, A workshop exploring a partnership project developed to support young people facing barriers to engage with in-person music making.

Tom Rickard, Eoin Dolan, Foróige

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